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Opening extract from

A Royal Disaster

Written by

Meg Cabot

Published by

Macmillan Children's Books

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Dear Reader

You don't know how excited I am to be welcoming you to Genovia, home of the most not-ready-for-royalty princess ever, Amelia Mignonette Grimaldi Thermopolis Renaldo.

It's been fifteen years since we were allowed our first glimpse into the diaries of Princess Mia (and introduced to Genovia, that glittering little principality tucked along the sea between France and Italy), and so much has happened since then:

We used to shop in stores. Now we shop online. Phones hung on the wall. Now we keep them in our pockets. We used to go to the record store. Now we download music.

But where many things have changed since the original publication of The Princess Diaries series, most things have stayed the same:

Struggling to pass Algebra. Fighting — and making up — with your best friend. Getting asked out by the boy you secretly like. Being forced to have dinner with your grandmother. Cats. Foreign princes attempting to overthrow the throne. High-school graduation. And real princesses!

I hope you'll accept my royal invitation to visit Genovia (and the world of The Princess Diaries). I just know you're going to enjoy the trip.

Much love

Meg Cabot



First published in the UK 2001 by Macmillan Children's Books

This edition published 2015 by Macmillan Children's Books
an imprint of Pan Macmillan
20 New Wharf Road, London N1 9RR
Associated companies throughout the world
www.panmacmillan.com

ISBN 978-1-4472-8063-7

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1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Typeset by Nigel Hazle
Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon CR0 4YY

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Monday, October 19, 8 a.m.

OK. So I was just in the kitchen, eating cereal – you know, the usual Monday morning routine – when my mom comes out of the bathroom with this funny look on her face. I mean, she was all pale and her hair was kind of sticking out and she had on her terry-cloth robe instead of her kimono, which usually means she's premenstrual.

So I was all, 'Mom, you want some aspirin? Because, no offence, but you look like you could use some.'

Which is sort of a dangerous thing to say to a premenstrual woman, but, you know, she's my mom, and all. It's not like she was going to karate chop me, the way she would if anybody else said that to her.

But she just went, 'No. No, thanks,' in this dazed voice.

So then I assumed something really horrible had happened. You know, like the cat had eaten another sock, or they were cutting off our electricity again because I'd forgotten to fish the bill out of the salad bowl where Mom keeps stuffing them.

So I grabbed her and I was like, 'Mom? Mom, what is it? What's wrong?'

She sort of shook her head, like she does when she's confused over the microwave instructions on a frozen pizza.



'Mia,' she said, in this shocked but happy way, 'Mia. I'm pregnant.'

Oh my God. OH MY GOD.

My mother is having my Algebra teacher's baby.



Monday, October 19, Homeroom

I am really trying to take this calmly. You know? Because there isn't any point in getting upset about it.

But how can I NOT be upset? My mother is about to become a single parent. AGAIN.

You would think she'd have learned a lesson with me and all, but apparently not.

As if I don't have enough problems. As if my life isn't over already. I just don't see how much more I can be expected to take. I mean, apparently, it is not enough that:

1. I am the tallest girl in the freshman class.
2. I am also the least endowed in the chest area.
3. Last month, I found out that my mother was dating my Algebra teacher.
4. Also last month, I found out that I am the sole heir to the throne of a small European country – Genovia.
5. I have to take princess lessons.
6. In December, I am supposed to be introduced to my new countrymen and women on national television in Genovia (population 30,000, but still).
7. I don't have a boyfriend.



Oh, no. You see, all of that isn't enough of a burden, apparently. Now my mother has to get pregnant out of wedlock. AGAIN.

Thanks, Mom. Thanks a whole lot.



Monday, October 19, still Homeroom

And what *about* that? Why weren't she and Mr Gianini using birth control? Could someone please explain that to me? Whatever happened to her diaphragm? I know she has one. I found it once in the shower when I was a little kid. I took it and used it as a birdbath for my Barbie townhouse for a few weeks, until my mom finally found out and took it away.

And what about condoms??? Do people my mother's age think they are immune to sexually transmitted diseases? They are obviously not immune to pregnancy, so what gives?

This is so like my mother. She can't even remember to buy toilet paper. How is she going to remember to use birth control????????



Monday, October 19, Algebra

I can't believe this. I really can't believe this.

She hasn't told him. My mother is having my Algebra teacher's baby, *and she hasn't even told him.*

I can tell she hasn't told him, because when I walked in this morning, all Mr Gianini said was, 'Oh, hi, Mia. How are you doing?'

OH, HI, MIA. HOW ARE YOU DOING?????

That is not what you say to someone whose mother is having your baby. You say something like, 'Excuse me, Mia, can I see you a moment?'

Then you take the daughter of the woman with whom you have committed this heinous indiscretion out into the hallway, where you fall on bended knee to grovel and beg for her approval and forgiveness. That is what you do.

I can't help staring at Mr G and wondering what my new baby brother or sister is going to look like. My mom is totally hot, like Carmen Sandiego, only without the trench coat – further proof that I am a biological anomaly, since I inherited neither my mother's thick curly black hair nor her C-cup. So there's nothing to worry about *there.*

But Mr G, I just don't know. Not that Mr G isn't good-looking, I guess. I mean, he's tall and has all his hair (score

one for Mr G, since my dad's bald as a parking meter). But what is with his nostrils? I totally can't figure it out. They are just so . . . big.

I sincerely hope the kid gets my mom's nostrils and Mr G's ability to divide fractions in his head.

The sad thing is, Mr Gianini doesn't have the slightest idea what is about to befall him. I would feel sorry for him if it weren't for the fact that it is all his fault. I know it takes two to tango, but please, my mother is a painter. He is an Algebra teacher.

You tell me who is supposed to be the responsible one.



Monday, October 19, English

Great. Just great.

As if things aren't bad enough, now our English teacher says we have to complete a *journal* this semester. I am not kidding. A *journal*. Like I don't already keep one.

And get this: at the end of every week, we're supposed to *turn our journals in*. For Mrs Spears to *read*. Because she wants to get to know us. We are supposed to begin by introducing ourselves, and listing our pertinent stats. Later, we are supposed to move on to recording our innermost thoughts and emotions.

She has got to be joking. Like I am going to allow Mrs Spears to be privy to my innermost thoughts and emotions. I won't even tell my innermost thoughts and emotions to my *mother.* Would I tell them to my *English teacher*?

And I can't possibly turn *this* journal in. There's all sorts of stuff in here I don't want anyone to know. Like how my mother is pregnant by my Algebra teacher, for instance.

Well, I will just have to start a new journal. A *fake* journal. Instead of recording my innermost emotions and feelings in it, I'll just write a bunch of lies, and hand that in instead.

I am such an accomplished liar, I very highly doubt Mrs Spears will know the difference.



MY ENGLISH JOURNAL
by Mia Thermopolis

KEEP OUT!!!

THIS MEANS YOU,
UNLESS YOU ARE MRS SPEARS!!!!!!

An Introduction

Name: Amelia Mignonette Grimaldi Thermopolis Renaldo Known as Mia for short. Her Royal Highness Princess Mia in some circles.

Age: Fourteen

Yr in School: Freshman

Sex: Haven't had it yet. Ha, ha, just kidding, Mrs Spears! Ostensibly female, but lack of breast size lends disturbing androgyny.

Description: Five foot nine, short mouse-brown hair (new blonde highlights), grey eyes, size eight shoe.



Parents:

Mother: Helen Thermopolis

Occupation: Painter

Father: Artur Christoff Phillipe Gerard Grimaldi Renaldo

Occupation: Prince of Genovia

Marital Status: Because I am the result of a fling my mother and father had in college, they never married (each other) and are both currently single. It is probably better this way, since all they ever do is fight.

With each other, I mean.

Pets: One cat, Fat Louie. Orange and white, Louie weighs over twenty-five pounds. Louie is eight years old, and has been on a diet for approximately six of those years. When Louie is upset with us for, say, forgetting to feed him, he eats any socks he might find lying around. Also, he is attracted to small glittery things, and has quite a collection of beer-bottle caps and tweezers which he thinks I don't know about, hidden behind the toilet in my bathroom.

Best Friend: My best friend is Lilly Moscovitz. Lilly has been my best friend since kindergarten. She is fun to

hang out with because she is very, very smart and has her own public-access television show, *Lilly Tells It Like It Is*. She is always thinking up fun things to do, like stealing the foam-board sculpture of the Parthenon that the Greek and Latin Derivatives class made for Parents' Night and holding it for a ransom of ten pounds of lime Starbursts.

Not that that was us, Mrs Spears. I am just using that as an example of the type of crazy thing Lilly might do.

Boyfriend: Ha! I wish.

Address: I have lived all my life in New York City with my mother, except for summers, which I have traditionally spent with my father at his mother's chateau in France. My father's primary residence is Genovia, a small country in Europe located on the Mediterranean between the Italian and French borders. For a long time, I was led to believe that my father was an important politician in Genovia, like the mayor, or something. Nobody told me that he was actually a member of the Genovian royal family – that he was, in fact, the reigning monarch, Genovia being a principality. I guess nobody ever would have told me,



either, if my dad hadn't gotten testicular cancer and become sterile, making me – his illegitimate daughter – the only heir he'll ever have to his throne. Ever since he finally let me in on this slightly important little secret (a month ago) Dad has been living at the Plaza Hotel here in New York, while his mother, my *grandmère*, the Dowager Princess, gives me princess lessons so I won't make a fool of myself when I ascend the throne.

For which I can only say: thanks. Thanks a whole lot.

And do you want to know what the *really* sad part is? None of that was lies.